

The 1995 National Shellfish Register of Classified Growing Waters



The *National Shellfish Register* has been published every five years since 1966 as a cooperative effort among the nation's shellfish-producing states, federal agencies such as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC). Since 1985 it has been produced in NOAA's Office of Ocean Resources Conservation and Assessment (ORCA). Its purpose is to summarize the status of growing-water classifications of the nation's commercial shellfish resources. The 1995 Register includes information on the status of estuarine and non-estuarine commercial shellfish-growing waters as of January 1, 1995, and marks the first time the data has been available on a CD-ROM and the Internet.

The 1995 Register characterizes the status of over 4,200 shellfish-growing waters in 21 coastal states, reflecting an assessment of 24.7 million acres of estuarine and non-estuarine waters. Over 77 million pounds (meat weight) of oysters, clams and mussels were harvested

from these waters in 1995, having a dockside value of \$200 million. For the first time, the report includes such factors as relative shellfish abundance, the basis for classification, the status of shellfish restoration efforts, and the potential to upgrade harvest classification for each growing water. The data elements collected in previous Registers are also provided; these include growing water name and location, harvest classification, area, and the types of pollution sources contributing to harvest limitation.

The Register's five-year publication cycle provides the continuity needed

to assess trends in classified growing waters. The classification information in the Register gives public and private stakeholders a broad indicator with which to track the health of the nation's estuarine and coastal waters. Analysis of the Register data also provides decision-makers with insights into the effectiveness of pollution control programs that directly or indirectly affect environmental quality.

The Data

The classification of shellfish-growing waters is based on the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP), a cooperative effort involving states, the shellfish industry, and the FDA. Since 1983, it has been administered through the ISSC. The ISSC was formed to promote shellfish sanitation, adopt uniform procedures, and develop comprehensive guidelines (*NSSP Manual of Operations Parts 1 & 2*) to regulate the harvesting, processing and shipment of shellfish.

The 1995 data show that 69 percent (14.9 million acres) of the total classified waters were approved, 8 percent were conditionally approved, 11 percent

were restricted or conditionally restricted, 13 percent were prohibited. The top five pollution sources contributing to harvest limitations were urban runoff, upstream sources, wildlife, individual wastewater treatment systems, and municipal wastewater treatment plants. State shellfish management personnel reported almost 500 shell-

Encouraging Trends

Since the first Register was compiled in 1966, the acreage of classified shellfish-growing waters has increased more than twofold, from 10 million to 24.7 million acres (including unclassified acres). There has been an increase of 2.9 million acres and 1,058 shellfish-growing areas since the 1990 Register. The area of approved waters is at an all-time high of 14.9 million acres (69 percent). In addition, only 2.8 million acres of prohibited waters (13 percent - the smallest ever) were reported.

Classified shellfish-growing waters of the U.S.: 1966-1995*

	Publication Years of National Shellfish Register (1,000 acres)						
	1966	1971	1974	1980	1985	1990	1995
TOTAL	10,190	14,100	14,792	14,218	16,837	18,702	21,574
Approved for Harvest	8,100 (79)**	10,362 (73)	10,560 (71)	10,685 (75)	11,402 (68)	12,304 (66)	14,853 (69)
Total Harvest Limited	2,090 (21)	3,738 (27)	4,232 (29)	3,533 (25)	5,435 (32)	6,398 (34)	6,721 (31)
<i>Conditionally Approved</i>	88 (1)	410 (3)	387 (3)	587 (4)	1,463 (9)	1,571 (8)	1,695 (8)
<i>Restricted</i>	na	30 (<1)	34 (<1)	55 (1)	637 (4)	463 (2)	2,106 (10)
<i>Conditionally Restricted</i>	na	na	na	na	na	0 (-)	119 (1)
<i>Prohibited</i>	2,002 (20)	3,298 (23)	3,811 (26)	2,891 (20)	3,335 (20)	4,364 (23)	2,801 (13)

* Based on National Shellfish Registers (published only in years indicated). Data does not include Alaska, Hawaii, or waters designated as unclassified.

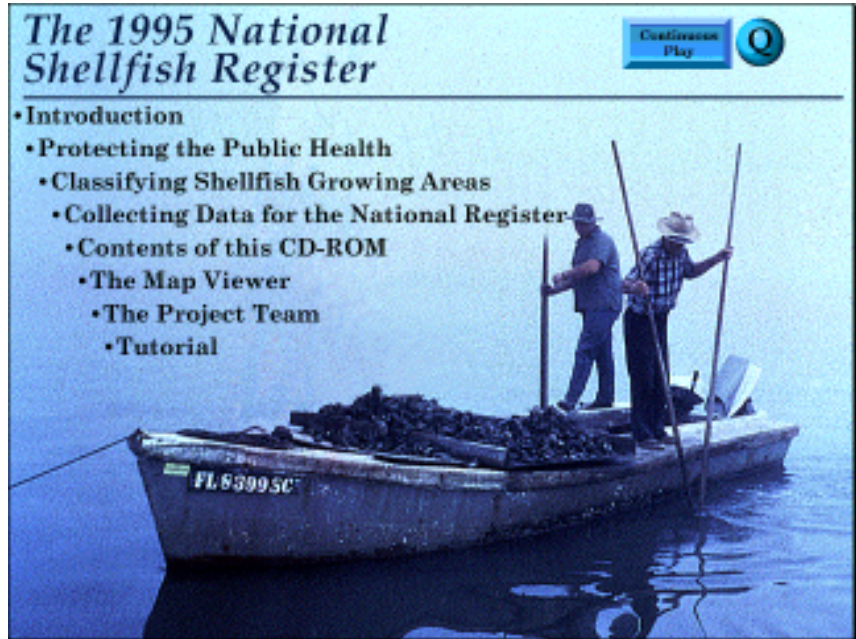
**Numbers in parentheses are percent of total annual classified acres and does not include waters designated as unclassified.

fish restoration activities in harvest-limited waters, and noted that 74 percent (5 million acres) of harvest-limited waters had some potential for classification upgrade.

Digital Geographic Files

CD-ROM. The CD-ROM is a product of NOAA's State of the Coast Project and contains digital geographic files for each coastal state. In addition to the shellfish-growing areas, the files also include NOAA's Coastal Assessment Framework (CAF, estuarine and coastal drainage areas), and population centers. To encourage their immediate use in GIS and desktop mapping software, each digital geography has been provided in multiple formats: ARC/INFO® Interchange (E00); ARC/INFO® coverages; ArcView® shapefiles; and MapInfo® Interchange Format (MIF).

ArcView® Data Publisher is used to provide access to shellfish-growing area maps and associated spreadsheets. A customized menu allows users to select a state, select the attribute to map, and zoom in to areas



The main menu of the multimedia overview includes access to the Data Publisher Tutorial.

of interest by name. Spreadsheets showing the size of shellfish-growing areas and their percentage of total state shellfish-growing areas support each mapped attribute.

In addition, the application remains a fully functional ArcView® 2.1 Data Publisher tool, allowing map

display, data query, print, and other capabilities. Users may export spreadsheets, overlay their own projected geographic data on maps, and much more. A multimedia overview and Data Publisher tutorial are also provided.

Internet Sites. For downloadable files of the 1995 Register report and digital geographies, visit ORCA's web site:

<http://www-orca.nos.noaa.gov/projects/95register>

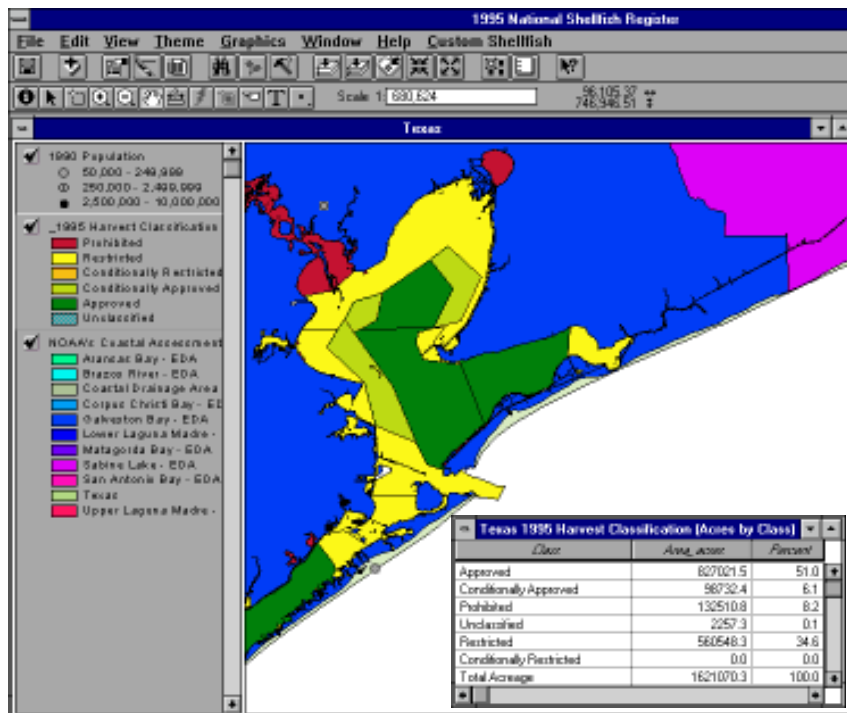
Or visit NOAA's State of the Coast web site:

http://state_of_coast.noaa.gov

For More Information

For additional information or a complimentary copy of the printed report or the CD-ROM, contact:

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ArcView® Data Publisher provides direct map and spreadsheet viewing for Windows users. Zoom, query, summarize and other tools allow data analysis.

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